Your Guide for Tackling Medicare

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Foreword

Over the last 40 years, I’ve devoted my life to showing people that there’s nothing more rewarding than taking care of yourself! Eating well, staying active and, more importantly, maintaining a positive attitude are key factors to living your best life.

As I grow older, living my best life also means making sure I have the right protections in place to match my lifestyle – including a solid health insurance plan. This year I had to make some major health insurance decisions as I turned 65 and became eligible for Medicare.

I chose to partner with Ensurem because, like me, they care about helping people. My Ensurem agent was amazing! They walked me through my options and, rather than push me to buy something I didn’t need, they recommended my Medicare solutions, I wanted to work with a company that shares my values.

Ensurem created this guide for people new to Medicare who want to learn about their options and how to enroll, and I hope their advice is as helpful for you, as it was for me.

Best of luck on your Medicare journey!

Denise Austin,
Ensurem Brand Ambassador
Author Fit Over 50 Magazine
Medicare 101

Are you overwhelmed by the thought of enrolling in Medicare? We understand the process can be confusing! However, Medicare is a key component to health care after retirement. It will likely be your sole form of health insurance for the rest of your life, so it’s essential that you understand it completely.

We created this guide to help you learn about your Medicare options. These changes may include star ratings, plan premiums or deductible increases.

Let’s get started.

New in 2022! Throughout this guide, you will see notes on what’s new with Medicare for 2022. These changes may include star ratings, plan premiums or deductible increases.
What is Medicare?

Medicare is the federal health insurance program. It is designed for people ages 65 and older, but it’s also available for individuals with certain disabilities and diseases.

Medicare is composed of two parts: A and B.
The parts of Medicare

Medicare Part A
Medicare Part A is hospital insurance. It covers inpatient hospital stays, care in a skilled nursing facility, hospice care, and some home health care.

Medicare Part B
Medicare Part B is medical insurance and covers certain doctors’ services, outpatient care, medical equipment, and preventive services.

You may have heard the term “Original Medicare.” This is simply Medicare Part A and Part B.
Private Insurance Plans

You may also choose to enroll in Medicare-approved private insurance plans to replace or supplement any gaps in your Original Medicare coverage.

Medicare Advantage Plans

Also called Medicare Part C, these plans “bundle” Medicare Part A, Part B and usually include Part D. Each year, Medicare Advantage Plans are rated annually on a scale of 1 star (worst) to 5 stars (best) by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

New in 2022! The average star rating for a Medicare Advantage Plan with prescription drug coverage increased from 4.06 to 4.37 stars, with approximately 68% of plans rated with 4 stars or higher. Each year, Medicare Advantage Plans are rated annually on a scale of 1 star (worst) to 5 stars (best) by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.
Medicare Supplement Insurance

Commonly called Medigap, these plans help fill the gaps in your Original Medicare coverage to avoid paying out-of-pocket expenses for covered services and supplies.

Prescription Drug Plans

Also called Medicare Part D, these plans work with your Original Medicare coverage to help cover any prescription drugs you may need now or in the future.

New in 2022! The Medicare Part D standard monthly premium increased from $31.47 to $33 per month.
What are my options?

Select Original Medicare and receive coverage under Medicare Part A and Part B. Remember that this does not include prescription coverage or many other medical expenses.

Select Original Medicare and add Part D to cover your prescription expenses.

Select a Medicare Advantage plan to cover your Original Medicare services. You may also enroll in a plan that also includes prescription drug coverage and possibly extra benefits.

Select Original Medicare along with a Medicare Supplement Insurance plan.
What are some of the challenges I may face with Medicare?

The number one issue with Original Medicare is the gaps in coverage leading to out-of-pocket expenses.

Premiums, deductibles, copays and out-of-pocket expenses are on the rise. Even with Medicare coverage included, by age 75 the cost of paying for health care will account for 15 percent of your overall spending, which is double what you would have spent during your working life.iii

New in 2022! The Medicare Part A and Part B premiums or deductibles are increasing.

Medicare Part A
$OWKRXJKPRVW0HGLFDUHEHQH4FLDULHSVGRQWSD\DSUHPLXPIRU3DUW$ those who do could experience premium hikes of $15 - $28 a month. Part A inpatient hospital deductible is $1,556 – up from $1,484.iv

Medicare Part B
The standard monthly premium increased from $148.50 to $170.10 per month. The Part B deductible increased from $203 to $233.iv
Out-of-pocket costs

According to Medicare.gov, the official U.S. Government website for Medicare, these out-of-pocket costs may include:

- Coinsurance
- Copayments
- Deductibles
You have coverage options

With the increasing costs of health care, more and more people are struggling to cover these expenses. When you can’t predict when and how often you may need to use your health insurance, it may be difficult to budget your medical expenses. Fortunately, there are other ways to help manage those out-of-pocket costs.

Medicare Advantage Plans (Medicare Part C) or a Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) may help.
Explore your options

Medicare Advantage replaces Original Medicare and usually includes additional coverage for prescription drugs. You may also get a plan that includes vision, hearing and dental coverage. Unlike Original Medicare, Medicare Advantage Plans have yearly limits on what you pay out of pocket for services covered by Medicare Part A and Part B.

New in 2022! Medicare Advantage premiums decreased. While many charge low, sometimes $0, monthly premiums, the average premium will be $19 – down from $21.22.\[^0\]

\[^0\]$0 plans not available in all areas. Call for details.

Another option is to add a Medicare Supplement plan to your Original Medicare to help cover some of your remaining health care costs such as copayments, coinsurance and deductibles.

Please note that you can’t have a Medicare Advantage Plan AND a Medicare Supplement plan at the same time.
How and when do I enroll in Medicare?

It’s best to enroll in Medicare during your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP). Your IEP lasts for seven months. It begins three months before the month of your 65th birthday and ends three months after the month you turn 65.
How to get Original Medicare?

You can enroll in Original Medicare in the following ways:

- **Online** at SocialSecurity.gov
- **By calling Social Security** at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY users 1-800-772-1213)
- **In-person** at your local Social Security office
The best time to enroll

Enroll in Original Medicare, Medicare Advantage or Medigap when you are first eligible. Some plans may require you to pay higher premiums or go through medical underwriting if you wait until after your first opportunity to enroll in a plan.

Already have health insurance?

If you’re covered under a group health plan based on your or your spouse’s current employment, it’s recommended that you still sign up for Medicare Part A during your IEP. You do not need to sign up for additional Medicare coverage at this time.
Special Enrollment Periods

When your current insurance ends, you will be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period. This is an 8-month timeframe that begins after your previous coverage ends. You can enroll in Original Medicare, Medicare Advantage or Medicare Supplement Insurance during this time as well, and you will not be subjected to medical underwriting. You will be guaranteed approval for Medicare Supplement plans.

Time is of the essence

If you don’t sign up for Medicare during your Initial Enrollment Period or a Special Enrollment Period, you can sign up between Jan. 1st – March 31st of each year. However, your coverage will not start until July 1st of that year, and you may have to pay higher premiums for late enrollment. And if you wait to enroll in Medicare Advantage or Medigap, you have the chance of getting denied.
When should I start reviewing my Medicare options?

The short answer is: right now.

You must take the time to understand your options and do extensive research to make the right decision for you and your family.
How to enroll in a plan

When you’re ready to enroll, follow these steps:

Step 1
Enroll in Original Medicare Part A and Part B via the Social Security Administration

Step 2
Review your personal health care needs to see if you need additional coverage

Step 3
Shop for Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplement and Prescription Drug Plan options

If you have questions and would like to speak with a licensed insurance agent, call 866-228-0333 | TTY: 711
How can I learn more?

Here are some additional resources to help you with your research.


This document includes important information regarding the enrollment process, your coverage options and your rights.

Call 866-228-0333 to speak with an Ensurem licensed agent.

*HWIUGHSHUVRQDOL]HG health insurance counseling by contacting your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).

You can also learn more about topics related to Medicare, Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement at ensurem.com.
About Ensurem

Ensurem was founded in 2016 to help simplify the process of buying insurance for people who want to feel confident that they're getting the right coverage at the best rate.

We’re a marketplace offering a wide selection of Medicare and supplemental health insurance plans from the nation’s top-rated insurance companies. We’ll shop around for you, finding you the best selection of coverage for your needs at the best price.

Our licensed agents are highly experienced with plans in your area. They’ll serve as your advocate, guiding you through the plan selection and enrollment process. Rest assured you’ll always be taken care of.

Don’t want to talk to an agent? No problem! Our virtual Medicare assistant, Emma, can help you easily find products, compare rates and, in some cases, enroll into plans on ensurem.com/Emma. No matter your preference, you can Enroll Your Way with Ensurem.

We’re here to answer all your insurance questions before, during and after you enroll. Whether you need help finding a plan, verifying your current coverage or understanding your healthcare costs, we’re just a phone call away.
Thank You!

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Speak with a Licensed Insurance Agent: 866-228-0333 | TTY: 711